



December 2018

Christmas message

Greetings and peace in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the end of another busy year, it is my pleasure and delight to wish you all a holy and blessed Christmas. This is a holy time in the Church's year when we pause to celebrate the birth of Jesus over 2000 years ago. Jesus was born in a stable in the town of Bethlehem in very humble circumstances, and the first to offer their worship were shepherds who responded to a message from an angel who told them the Good News that a Saviour was born, the Messiah, the Lord.

People have all sorts of ways of keeping in touch with this. Some people go on tours to the Holy Land to visit Bethlehem. They come back with nativity scenes, figures of Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus which they set up in their living rooms. Some bring back other reminders of the Holy Land; water from the Jordan River, or a stone that might be incorporated into a church building. Christians have been making these kinds of pilgrimages for centuries and bringing back reminders of the story to help make it a present reality for us today.

Bethlehem today is a very different place from that depicted in our carols and Christmas cards. It is surrounded by a wall designed to keep Palestinian people out of Israel. It has frequently been caught up in the violence of conflict in that part of the world. Modern day Bethlehem is a reminder that the world is ridden with division and violence, where injustice, misuse of power and violence abound, and where those who are powerless are expected to be submissive to those with power. This reflects the way many people of the world think the Church should be as well; compelled into submission.

This is not the way of God. Jesus is the fullness of God revealed to us in a whole human life. He comes in vulnerability, as a helpless child, to be alongside us and to share our humanity. He invites us to follow him. He never attempts to force us to follow, but he comes as the fullness of God's grace and love to win us over. He shows us that the God we worship and that Christians believe in refuses to come in force, but in humility and in love.

The carol, "O little town of Bethlehem" has this line in the first verse: "the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." God is aware of the messiness of life and comes to be alongside us on our journey. God comes to dispel the darkness that we face, to be with us as we cope with the messiness of life and the difficulties we find ourselves in. God comes to open up a future laden with hope that is beyond our imagination; a future where there is justice and love. In short, God comes to give us a taste heaven. This Christmas, give your hopes and your fears to God. For Jesus is born to bring love into the world. He is with us and alongside us, working for love, peace and hope, that these gifts may be received in our hearts and in the hearts of every human being, so that all may know God's love.

Once again, may you and yours have a holy and blessed Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

The Very Reverend Lawrence Kimberley
Board Chair

Investment returns

September was another bumper quarter for investment returns. Equity markets continued to soar with the NZ and global share portfolios returning 7.4% and 7.3% respectively for the quarter. The performance of the lower risk bond portfolios was more mixed but with small positives still being achieved. This all means that the Balanced Pool performed more strongly than the Conservative Pool in the September 2018 quarter.

Post September we have seen some significant ups and downs in market performance. October has sometimes been a more volatile month for stocks and 2018 was no exception. Exactly what drove a significant downward adjustment in equity markets is open to debate, but fingers generally point to increased concerns about global trade, European and emerging markets uncertainty and an increase in worry about global growth prospects, inflation and rising interest rates. The early part of November has seen some reversal of this impact. However the volatility continues and we imagine it could become a regular feature in markets.

We will continue to keep an eye on the situation and remain vigilant. We do not consider it necessary to alter our investment strategy at this point but will if we perceive things have changed and consider it desirable to act.

It is tempting for members to react when market volatility increases. Unfortunately that's not always a good idea and we encourage you to hold fast through short term movements in the market. However, what is good to do from time to time is to check you are in the right fund for your risk appetite and the length of time you have until retirement.

The annual investment returns (before tax and expenses) for the last five years ended 31 March are:

	Balanced Pool p.a.	Conservative Pool p.a.
2018	6.3%	4.0%
2017	9.5%	4.3%
2016	4.6%	4.5%
2015	12.2%	7.3%
2014	10.2%	3.1%

Christian KiwiSaver Scheme

4 reasons to tell your children, grandchildren and friends about it

Christian KiwiSaver Scheme is the KiwiSaver scheme offered by The New Zealand Anglican Church Pension Board. It was founded on ethical investment principles that we believe reflect Christian values.

The Christian KiwiSaver Scheme offers all the standard features of KiwiSaver **PLUS**:

1. **Ethical investment:** No hidden surprises. We are active investment managers and know where the Scheme's monies are invested.
2. **One fixed fee:** Simple to work out and understand.
3. **No fees for members under age 18:** Applies from 1 January 2019.
4. **Personal service:** We welcome calls from our members. No call centres to deal with.

It's easy to join or transfer to our Scheme, apply online at www.christiankiwisaver.nz or complete a paper application found at the back of the Product Disclosure Statement (on the website under Documents). Applicants under age 18 will need to complete a paper application.

Office closed over Christmas / New Year

Our office will be closed over the Christmas / New Year period from 5pm on Friday 21 December 2018 and reopens at 8.30am on Monday 7 January 2019.